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The AUTHOR & JOURNALIST

APRIL, 1946

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The Author & Journalist

MOSTLY PERSONAL

By MARGARET A. BARTLETT, Co-Publisher



Margaret A. Bartlett

IT must be the Spring!

A poet-subscriber writes: "I, have one editor who, on returning a manuscript, has it all nicely scented with some delectable fragrance similar to sandalwood. The heavenly scent takes off a lot of the curse of a returned script. Wouldn't that be a nice custom for editors?" (Sage and leather scent for writers of Westerns. Tobacco and bourbon for

those who do rugged adventure or other rich male fiction. Lilies-of-the-valley for the Sunday School scribes. Possibilities no end! . . . "H-m!" sniffs the skeptic. "Clothes-pins might again become scarce articles.")

Another correspondent was feeling new life in her writing veins. An editor had apologized because the first page of a submitted manuscript had by mistake been stamped in the magazine's office, thereby ruining the script for further sending. But he didn't stop there. He "sent a beautifully typed new copy and a carbon—mailed flat in a large envelope, not using the No. 10 I had enclosed, stamped and addressed."

All of which gave us a bluebird feeling. Too often it seems that our ear for writers' complaints against editors has grown to gargantuan proportions, our ear for praise has shrivelled to mousey size.

Katherine S. Rosin, writing in *Book-of-the-Month Club News*, devoted a page and one-half to the "brown-haired, rangy man of thirty, permanently tanned of face, full of physical energy," who looks out from our cover this month. He is James Ramsey Ullman, "mountaineer who can write." His latest book and first novel, "The White Tower," published in September, was for six months a best seller. A New Yorker by birth, but now "more familiar with Tibet than Times Square," Ullman was born to moderate wealth. In his senior year at Princeton, he wrote a prize-winning essay, "Mad Shelley," subsequently published, which still brings him yearly royalties—of about \$150! After a few months in Paris, and two years on a Brooklyn paper, he turned to play-writing. His outstanding success was "Men in White." There were other moderate successes and then "four misfortunes in a row" in 1936. It was after these that he left for the Amazon jungles. Out of experience here came "The Other Side of the Mountain." "The White Tower," which revolves around the attempt of an American flyer and his associates to climb the Alpine Peak up the Weiss-turm, grew during the year Ullman was in action with the American Field Service in North Africa. On his return, according to Miss Rosin, "he worked on it for eleven straight months, stewing over each word, but seldom rewriting. . . . The result of his sober care was a joy to his agent and editor, who had to change hardly a word."

Miss Rosin's last statement especially interested us.

Riding out last Sunday, John and I were discussing a letter by Jim Marshall, Associate Editor, Collier's, now in that publication's Hollywood office, which appeared in the February, 1946, issue of *The Screen Writer*. Referring to original stories for the screen, Mr. Marshall said: "I think a great many originals fail, perhaps, because they are written but not edited. What producers read in short stories or serials or novels is not writers' work: it is a product of writer and editor. I have been writing for dough for 30 years and I know, as you do, that good writing is fifty per cent editing. . . . Every story a magazine gets, and buys, still is an unfinished piece of work. The editor buys it because he thinks he can, by expert editing, make a finished product out of it. Often, he succeeds; less frequently, the writer admits his success."

Robert M. Neal, whose "Writing Under Pressure" in this issue will be an inspiration to all who must squeeze writing time into a few precious hours each day, must really know the secret of doing it, for, besides being a professor of journalism at University of Missouri, he is managing editor of the city daily, *The Columbian Missourian*, and in between times, writes books (his publishers: D. Appleton-Century and Prentice-Hall) and articles for—to name a few—*Read, American Home, Parents' Magazine, Better Homes and Gardens*.

While Florence Means was born in up-state New York, and went thence to Topeka and Kansas City, the greater part of her life has been spent in Colorado. A tomboy year at the edge of Denver in her early teens, riding broncs from the plains, skating, canoeing, fishing, made the West dear to her, and she has continued to love and claim it from girlhood days.

Her set of mind toward "folks"—folks of all creeds and colors—was established early in her childhood, in the parsonage where she was born, for her father and mother, the minister and the minister's wife, always entertained missionaries, world-travelers and nationals—and numerous Indians from time to time. Here also was established the set toward books, for books were the one luxury which was a necessity, and Father's reading aloud was always a family joy.

The Means family has always delighted also in travel, throughout this country and Mexico; and Florence Means has found it especially interesting to settle in among varied groups, especially our South-western Indians, whom she has visited as often as possible during the past eighteen years. Her Hopi clan name is Tawahonsi, given her by Sun Clan women.

The outdoors, hiking, motoring; friendships with many peoples; painting; cooking; finding the characteristic cookery wherever she is traveling, these are some of Florence Means's hobbies. Carl Means heartily shares most of them, and the two—and their daughter, now in a home of her own—have gustatorial memories like a web across the continent, from Papa Moneta's in New York to Lucca's in San Francisco, to Antoine's in New Orleans, to the old Mitla in Mexico City.

(Continued on Page 20)

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THE AUTHOR & JOURNALIST

April, 1946

WRITING UP TO THE TEEN AGE

By FLORENCE CRANNELL MEANS



Florence Means

IS your aim the juvenile pot-boiler? Or do you aspire to "children's literature"?

Undoubtedly it is easier to "boil the pot," or to produce and sell good sound stories, in the juvenile field than in the adult. But literature is literature, whether *Vanity Fair* or *Water Babies*.

"Juveniles" as a whole move under the cloud of the hack writers, those who cobble their stories, turning out so many a month, after assiduous study of the period-

icals for which they are aimed, in order to finance the work they really want to do. Such writing is inevitably artificial.

"Juveniles" were also long belittled by the writers-down-to-their-audience, from the days of Little Lucy and Wikky, the Crossing Sweeper. If you are around fifty, you must have had the glad experience of coming on Prudy and Flaxie Frizzle in a desert of Sunday School library books. You had to read the whole library, being driven to read everything between book lids; but what a relief it was to find normal youngsters among all the sad little prigs.

Nowadays, instead of writing down, with a pat on the head, more and more writers set the imaginary child or teen-ager in front of their desks and write out to him, straight from the shoulder, or up to him, because he is today, in so many respects, an extraordinarily wise young person.

He is so wise that some librarians and editors feel that he does not need teen-age books: that when he has done with children's books he will reach for the adult shelf, and rightly. But there are all sorts of teen-agers, with all sorts of backgrounds, and my own experience has been that not only junior high and high, but junior college students love the teen-age book, if it is written up and not down. Anyway, if the teen-age book isn't interesting to adults, it ought never to have been published.

As a woman and a writer primarily for girls, I admit that boys often show more objective curiosity than their sisters; are more eager to know how

things work. Double-standard education in the home has accentuated the fundamental tendency. On the other hand, girls, women-children, are more interested in what makes people tick, if not in what makes clocks go. But boys or girls, they are pretty open-eyed and knowing. They are inhabitants of Today.

What are we to offer them, if we are aiming at solid, craftsmanlike stuff, or even maybe at Literature with a big L?

First, we must offer what they want—a good story.

You may just as well mail your manuscript in the bottom drawer of your desk if it hasn't a good story. Suspense should begin at once. Even in a book-length we'd better get the Who, Where, When and Wow in on the first page. (It was a gentle-faced Sister in a Spanish-American school, by the way, whom I heard advise the Wow.)

See some of Lenora Mattingly Weber's teen-age books, and how they capture you in the first paragraph.

Then the story should move faster than any adult story except of the action or mystery type. Yet not too fast. Give your reader time to immerse himself in the situation. The other day I asked a literary critic why one of my own favorites in my list should be my poorest seller; within my own capabilities it had seemed to me to "have everything."

"I wonder if it hasn't too much?" she asked. "Too much plot, too many characters, moving so fast that they distract the reader from the main issues and people?"

For me, nailing down the plot is often the one painful part of the exciting and joyous work of writing; but I would as soon try to cut a dress without a pattern as to write a book without a synopsis. Some can do it; not I.

I'm working on a new synopsis this week. I roll yellow paper into my typewriter and chart my characters. Then I begin to write things that these people, in this setting, might do; things that could logically happen. I have a large family come to Denver from an Indian village, and the sixteen-year-old girl enter a Denver high school after her years of infrequent contact with contemporary American life. How will it look to her? What will her emotions be?

Whom will she "take up with"? What is likely to develop from such friendships? What problems does youth face today, and how would they be met by a girl reared outside them?

There is so much that could happen that the week has proved almost over-exciting to this synopsis writer. But that is all to the good. Could there be genuine creation without excitement? Maybe this won't prove a genuine creation; but at least it has the first requisite.

Next I write a real synopsis, organizing these possible doings. I study this synopsis, scrutinizing the plot for "bone beauty." The skeleton must be strong and well articulated or no amount of dimpled flesh and well-made garments can do much with it.

Finally I chop it into chapters and can start writing with a free heart. Yes, freedom within bounds. The whole story, and each chapter in it, knows where it is going and how far it must get; but within these limits all sorts of unexpected things can happen, and do.

I started with characters, charting them carefully, just as I draw a plan of the house where the major part of the action occurs, or a map of the locality. I list characteristics, physical, mental, moral; taste in dress, recreation, books; turn of language and favorite expressions. Those favorite expressions can be a cheap device, taking the place of genuine characterization. One of my early characters gawshed uncontrollably all over every page.

Sometimes I take a person I know as a starting point, thinking, "Now Marydel is much the sort of girl I want Adella Mary to be." Yet if Adella Mary is vital (viable!) she becomes herself on the first page, resembling her prototype only as you resemble your mother.

Finally, there's something wrong if I don't feel my main character so keenly that, for the duration, I am she. For months now I've been tall, slim, dark brown: until I've looked in the glass.

Does the young reader care about strong characterization? It's as much a part of the good story to him as is the plot, though he may demand it less consciously and vocally. What is it you remember about Louisa May Alcott's stories? Or about Thackeray's?

I asked the above-mentioned critic what criticisms she would make of my own writing. For years she has been professor of children's literature in a university, and now is juvenile book editor for a large publishing house. Her main suggestion was that I could focus more strongly on making people instead of types. My daughter, also writing, chimed in, "Well, Mother, it's true your people have their faults; but, good heavens! how you can count on their virtues! And the virtues are always the ones you yourself consider most important."

How characterize and not type? Hattie Horner Louthan has said that twenty people sitting down to a turkey dinner might have many of the same fundamentals of character, but twenty ways of carving a turkey.

Yes, the teen-ager wants strongly marked characters, with whom he can identify himself, moving through a good, swift story in which he thus vicariously takes part.

But the young reader is not the only person we must please. There's the parent, still choosing and buying some of his children's books; the trained librarian and teacher, who have much of the say-so about the supply on the shelves; the critic, whose reviews guide librarian and teacher. What do these groups want?

First, what subject matter? Period stories, historical



"All together now, three rousing cheers! REJECTION! REJECTION! REJECTION!"

stories, have long been favorites with many of them. These tales make history come alive; and our present-day teen-agers have been somewhat divorced from history. They have perhaps less sense of continuity than any other generation. Don't they seem rather hung in mid-air, without the solid past under their feet?

Yet, as to the story of the past, cautions are increasingly voiced. In the first place, as with the adult historical romance, the story itself is often poor, a puppet show in which brightly costumed dolls are put through an artificial plot. The tinsel of glamorous costume and custom, the rapid movement of swashbuckling action often hide woodenness.

With delight I have done five period books. In trying to avoid the above dangers, I have plunged deep in my period, reading everything I could find about it and everything written in the course of it—especially magazines and papers published at the time. I have haunted historical museums to see the things of the time. I have talked for hours with Oldest Inhabitants.

Though less vital than the thought of the period, details are valuable for giving reality. I was charmed when my old doctor told me that safety pins were not manufactured in the 1870's; but my "straight pins for babies" were disputed by the editor, and I had to write twenty letters before I got confirmation that satisfied him. We had the same difficulty with "straight shoes," shoes for women and children made on symmetrical lasts, without right and left. I've encountered other oddities as hard to confirm. People's memories are fallible, so the editors demand printed proof—print being infallible.

Also one gathers all the unprinted details possible: the "bouncers," like bedspring coils, around the edge of a hoop-skirt; the new old geography songs; the "ombre" that was my grandmother's reception room. Trivia? Yes,

"the round
"of littles that large life compound." (Lanier)

Another objection to an over-balance of period stories is that our young people are living in a difficult age and need all possible help to understand and meet it. So those who know, including Siri Andrews, quoted earlier, ask for more stories of today and here, stories that grapple with present-day prob-

lems honestly and within limits, maturely; never losing the story, mind you. Stories of the city seem to be a teen-age need; there have been more good rural stories.

School is always a popular subject with the young reader, and with the mentors, too, if well handled. Judging by reviews and sales I conclude that my own two school stories are more popular with reader than with editor. They were fun to write; but my father looked up from a perusal of the first to say, "How times have changed! In my college days one of our purposes was study." And a young reader wrote to me, "I stood on my head, I laughed so hard over *Dusky*. I didn't suppose college would be like that." Well, I think it was, pretty much; but both comments indicate something wrong in the books, a too definite frivolity in the approach.

Vocational stories are liked and approved by reader and mentor. Some excellent ones have appeared lately, as for instance the scientific farming stories by Sarah Lindsay Schmidt of Fort Collins, Colorado. There is room for many more good ones. In too many the story has been hung on the vocation, and has been pretty flimsy or stodgy itself.

Another approved type of subject matter is the regional story of America today; and included in this are the stories of the different groups that make up our country. Many are placing this theme first: it is critically important if, as we believe, race hatred and a Nazi-Japanese sense of race superiority are among the most fruitful seeds of a new war. If so, our best chance of building a new world on today's wreckage is to get at the young with vital ideas of the essential potential equality of all peoples and of their right to equal opportunity. The learned men have spelled it out for us, that incontrovertible flesh, bone, plasma, brain cell equality; but convinced emotions are more potent than convinced minds. Therefore, fiction, honestly informing the emotions, may prove our best weapon for keeping what our boys fought so well for, a sound democracy, a durable peace.

For myself, this is my dearest aim. My publishers thought me mildly cracked when, about eight years ago, I proposed to do a straight school story set on a sea island off the coast of South Carolina. At midnight, gathered around me in the guest room of that school, those glowing, dark, plain, beautiful Negro girls had said, "Mrs. Means, know what we wish? We wish you'd write a story about us. Just as if we were white. And leave the Problem out." Another said, "You couldn't write a story about us and leave the Problem out." That clinched it. I wrote the book and Houghton Mifflin published it, early in the history of that sort of teen-age book. Its sales, by the way, continue good.

Splendid work has been done along that line, by John Tunis, Marjorie Hill Allee (who has this year passed from us), Doris Gates, Margaret Ashmun and others. We need more. But not, as Alice Dalgliesh lately said, the story of Tolerance. Tolerance is a holier-than-thou attitude. Let's have Understanding. Let's have Appreciation.

For myself, I never grow really acquainted with a minority group (who are proud majorities in the lands of their origin, remember, with perhaps the notable exception of one of the proudest clans of all, which has no country). I never live with them, eat with them, make myself one of them, without learning to love, enjoy, admire. Our warm, gracious, beauty-loving Spanish-Americans, for example! Yes, I know that in my city and in some others, groups of young Spanish-Americans are fomenting trouble today; so are other nationality-groups—old-stock

Americans among them. I know there are undesirable qualities which seem as characteristic as the desirable ones; in what group are there not?

But I go down into our San Luis Valley, up into the New Mexico mountain towns which are the source of some of our Spanish-speaking population, and find there Spanish colonies that were founded in the sixteenth century; a larger, prouder American lineage than that of us vain pre-Revolutionary Anglo-Saxons. I go back of the Mexican population and revel in its rich background in Mexico. I enlarge my circle of acquaintance in Denver, and find as many types and degrees as among any of the rest of us. Only then do I try a full-length book about them. And before it goes to press it has been carefully read by some of the folks who move across its pages. With me that is an unbreakable rule.

Miss Andrews's other criticism of my work, by the way, was kindly put. She said she didn't think I had erred thus far, "but as this passion grips you more and more strongly, be watchful that you do not subordinate story to theme."

And in these present-day stories, do not soft-pedal too much. As Howard Pease puts it, don't be tender-minded. Our young people are on speaking terms with struggle, pain, death; admit their existence. And do not make all your parents saints, all your boys and girls heroes and heroines. As Miss Andrews also said, it is good for the young reader unconsciously to store up help and guidance from book-people faulty like himself.

Obviously any information in a teen-age book or story must be accurate. Obviously style should be good. I'm delighted to learn that even for the very young the word-lists of yesterday are being junked. I never would use them. How were our children to learn new words if they were given only those they already knew? Use the most discriminating words, the best style, you possess; the simpler the better, so long as you say what you mean to say, precisely as in writing for adults.

As to technique, also, use all you have, though with less of "posture and get-ture," as Mrs. Louthan puts it. As to content, there are, of course, sordid deeps which we avoid; and crime is seldom admitted, though people like Howard Pease—in his strong books for boys—can and do use it. The many old taboos are passing; and if you're good enough you can buck any that remain.

Fallible elders, for instance: one of my favorite frivolous, petted mothers has called forth remonstrance, to be sure, but praise also. Sick children have long been taboo, though they still exist in this vale of woe. I mean, some day, to use as leading characters a girl and boy crippled by polio.

Other taboos prohibit the playing up of luck, surely a reasonable prohibition; the belittling of law and the police; poor grammar in dialogue; strong doses of dialect. Heavy dialect clogs reading, annoys the most accustomed adult and even more the young reader. But I contend—and have contended through several volumes—that speech registers, molds, and actually is thought, and that a good job of characterization is impossible without etched-in peculiarities of speech. Etched-in, mind you. To change the figure, a pin-head of garlic is much better than a whole button.

I'm not of the school that says "there's no such thing as a little garlic." And my literary garlic gets plenty of criticism. More and more I strive after the mere flavor, the agreeable soupçon. Arna Bon-temps attains such a flavor, or cadence, of Negro

dialect superbly in the "Sad-Faced Boy." And I struggle on.

To sum up, teen-age writing, though set in the adolescent's own field of action, should contain everything that adult writing does, with certain factors implicit rather than explicit, with most psychological problems only suggested, with movement swifter.

Implicit. In my own Hopi and Navajo books, for instance, the adult reader is blind or I very lacking, if it is not plain to him that here is fruitful ground for ugliness as well as beauty.

And how make the start in this field, if not already launched? I think especially of books, but what applies to them applies also to short stories.

You might start as I did, under the impulse of family reminiscence. Everyone has in his life the makings of at least one book: the makings; the finished and salable product is something else again.

Among my personal friends, some who have started spinning from themselves, like spiders, are Lenora

Mattingly Weber, Ann Spence Warner, Marian McIntyre McDonough, Lulita Pritchett. The first two began with personal experience and the last two, and I, from family pioneering. With most of this group, the first book led to others along the same line.

I myself then found my daughter's college life demanding a book, and her years at art school demanding a sequel to incorporate some of her gay, inconsequential fun. Then, for me, came the intense and growing interest in our minority groups. If you never write anything in which you are not deeply and honestly—yes, and excitedly—interested, the interest seems to seize on new objects and to continue growing and spreading, so that you never suffer a shortage of themes, but always have an over-supply.

Strong story, strong characters, interesting setting, realization of life, a complete identification of yourself with your characters and immersion in their problems, and your best in workmanship—these, it seems to me, are your tools for writing up to the teens.

NEW MAGAZINES AND THEIR NEEDS

Housekeepers Digest, 5549 Germantown, Philadelphia, Pa., is a new monthly using articles on cooking, recipes, canning, sewing, interior decorating, and household hints. A few short stories, 500 to 2500 words, and novelettes, of interest to home-loving women are also used. "We would like some good material for our June issue on cooking, canning, etc.," writes Mada Winship, who, with D. Boyd Bolton, edits the monthly. "We are paying only on publication," she continues, "and we do not wish any articles that are costly, as we are a new national magazine and will not pay large amounts at this time."

Picture News in Color and Action, 118 E. 40th St., New York 16, Emile Gauvreau, executive editor, pays \$5 a page, on acceptance, for features based on news or true happening, and adventure-type serials based on true story. This is a news venture in comic form—that is, every story is reproduced in action-pictures, color, and dialogue.

Home Magazine, 1713 Rhode Island Ave., N. W., Washington 6, D. C., published by the National Retail Lumber Dealers Association and distributed by retail dealers throughout the country to their customers and prospects, is a market for articles on new ideas for closets, kitchen cupboards and other storage space; ideas for attractive breakfast nooks, porches, fireplaces (inside and out-of-doors), laundry rooms; new ideas for home decoration, anything which the average home owner and home maker will find of interest and which is related to the building industry. Payment is made on the 10th of the month following acceptance, at 3 cents a word, plus \$3 for each photograph used. Maud C. Leachman is editor.

Columbia Publications, Inc., 241 Church St., New York 13, Robert W. Lowndes, editor, is reviving *Sports Fiction*, *Sports Winners* and *Super Sports*, and is now in the market for sports stories of all varieties. "We are interested in the more adult type of story, one which stresses characterization and carries more off-field motivation and action," writes Mr. Lowndes. Lengths should be between 2000 and 6000 words in short stories, 7000 to 10,000 for novelettes, and not over 2000 for the occasional fact

article. Payment will be on acceptance at 1 cent minimum.

Fat Wives Magazine, Physical Culture Publishing Co., 535 5th Ave., New York 17, wants personal problems with a slant on reduction of weight, as the magazine is designed to encourage people to reduce. "We do not want dour stories," states Harmony Haynes, managing editor, "but we hope that our readers can laugh and grow thin instead of laughing and growing fat." Pictures showing the subject before and after reducing are used. Payment is made on publication at 2 cents a word, \$5 for each photo, and \$2 each for jokes or fillers. "Mr. Macfadden has always taken all rights," adds Miss Haynes.

Lovers: The Magazine of Enchantment, 114 E. 32nd St., New York, is a new bi-monthly edited by Christine Gregory. "We want stories of young people, ordinary people—shop girls, office workers, etc.—as our magazine is to be slanted at that reader class, and we want the recognition element to be evident," writes Miss Gregory. "Generally, we want happy stories which avoid discouraging themes. We don't want anything dealing with manslaughter, suicide, murder, etc., and we don't want stories which moralize. . . . But we do want love stories—love stories that are full of romance, glamour, and enchantment. They must also be full of implied sex and sex situations which are a little on the hot side, yet must never be objectionable. . . . Always solve problems. Avoid returning vet angle. Stick to good American locale." Stories may be written in either first or third person, and from either the man's or woman's viewpoint. . . . Short stories, 3500 to 5000 words, romantic novelettes, 10,000 to 12,000 words, and a very small amount of poetry with love theme, will be used. Payment will be made on acceptance at 2 to 5 cents a word, depending on the quality of the story and how it fits requirements. For poetry, \$5 will be paid for short poem. Supplementary rights will be released if author makes a specific request.

The Screen Writer, official publication of the
(Continued on Page 18)

||| WRITING UNDER PRESSURE

By ROBERT M. NEAL

OF course you can write at white heat. You needn't miss sales because some one beats you to an editor with an extremely timely article or story or because a magazine puts an uncomfortably early time limit on the assignment it offers you. The atomic bomb news was hardly four weeks old before one of the largest newspaper syndicates had a serial story, "Love Braves an Atomic Bomb," in the hands of its clients.

Forced-draft writing isn't mysterious and it isn't cheapjohn, hack work. It is simply squeezing hours so that they yield more than normal. I have written three college textbooks, one of them of more than 400 pages and another of more than 500, and the slowest of them—the first—took only three months. I've just completed a revision of the 400-pager, bringing it to nearly 500 pages. The job required three weeks.

White-heat writing is grounded upon firm psychology. Go about it the right way, and you get results, good ones; tackle it hit or miss, and you waste typewriter ribbon.

The whole secret is in maintained momentum. An automobile on the open road uses little gasoline and travels far, but in the start-and-stop driving within a city it burns gallons of fuel and covers only a few miles. So it is with writing.

Probably your writing can't be started until evening, after your "regular" work is done. As you go to your typewriter, issue an order of the day that you are going into executive session and aren't to be disturbed unless the house catches fire. That's vital; you're starting a concatenated concentration too intense to permit interruptions, because they disturb your mental momentum and thereby waste time.

Think out enough subject matter and phrasing to get you started, to carry you about two typewritten pages. Don't fiddle with longhand first drafts; they are greedy of time. As soon as you have enough material organized to make 500 or 600 words, begin typewriting. By the time you have written those first two pages, you are in the swing of your work and have momentum. You can keep going. You'll be surprised how quickly you pick up the ability to think ahead, so that while your fingers type one paragraph your mind arranges the next.

Write as rapidly as the words will come, and don't stop for ten or fifteen minutes to think out a purple patch of phrasing. Such stoppings ruin your productivity. Once momentum is established, many of those purple patches will come without prompting. You won't have to chase them. Some won't, of course, but use whatever phrasing comes to mind. Knowing that a sentence or a paragraph is weak, mark an X in the margin beside it to indicate that the passage needs particular attention when you revise.

Keep writing just as long as you're fresh. At first that may be only a half hour, but after a week you can go a couple of hours without slackening. You'll know when it's time for a relief; your speed drops, sentences don't form, phrasings won't jell, you aren't confident what you wish to say next. This is the time for a break—of a certain sort. If you relax at the radio or by a repair job in your basement workshop, your "brief" time-out stretches into 30 or 40 minutes, and, much worse, you lose all your momentum. Do your relaxing by polishing some of

those spots marked by the marginal X-es. That provides enough of "something different" to be refreshing, yet doesn't pull you away from your writing. After 20 or 25 minutes of this directed diversion, return to writing and keep at it until you're fuzzy again. Then take another 20 minutes for "X work."

This combination of writing and revising will keep you going for several hours. When you're truly tired—your bones ache and your eyes burn—get away from the typewriter and read all that you have written in the last four or five hours. Make whatever improvements suggest themselves. You will be twice surprised, first at how much you have written and second at how completely you have forgotten what you wrote a couple of hours ago. You were working so intensely that the present paragraph crowded utterly out of mind the paragraph of an hour ago. Less intense writing wouldn't have crowded it out so soon, and your revision would not be productive because you would remember so thoroughly what you had intended to say that weak and awkward phrasings would be filled in and corrected from that remembrance and hence the blemishes wouldn't stand out. But your intenseness was so complete that now, as you revise, the paragraphs are as "new" as if you never had seen them before.

Let this hiatus for revision take considerable time, even an hour.

When it is done, return to writing until once more you are genuinely tuckered. Then revise, either "X work" or in toto, depending, on how frazzled you are. Now it is 2 a. m. or even 3. Get to bed. You have worked six or seven or eight hours. The amount of work you have done seems impossibly large, until you remember that you were using every moment of those six or seven or eight hours.

Next night, begin by a complete revising of everything you wrote yesterday, and then move into new material. This reworking brings your last-night writing into almost final form. The last burnishing will come when you retype it for submission to an editor. In that retyping, follow your earlier version faithfully except for improved phrasings that seem to come on the spur of the moment. Actually they're not spontaneous; they are a combining of what the psychologists used to call your subconscious and of your earlier revisions.

What you wrote on Monday you can have in last-draft form on Tuesday. That's fast enough for anything except daily newspaper work.

You can keep up forced-draft writing for several weeks, long enough for anything short of the Great American Novel. At the end you're exhausted. Certainly. Take a rest. Go for a week without writing.

Your incandescent heat, maintained hours at a time, blends speed and thoroughness. An eight-hour grind will give you far, far more than would eight one-hour dabbings, because half of each dabble would go into building momentum, "getting into the right frame of mind."

Don't fret about the quality of your writing. Fears that begin as little soon can become coruscatingly big. The very intensity of pressure work pulls into use every bit of your ability; likely enough you write better under pressure than you do at a leisurely pace, filled with mind-wanderings and relaxings.

Beware two dangers. First is hunger. Between 11 p. m. and midnight, you are hungry, gnawingly

so. Surely, for you have consumed vast quantities of energy and your personal furnace needs refueling. Eat a snack as you work, but don't eat too much. You need just enough to blunt your hunger, not enough to satisfy you. You're lost if your stomach competes with your typewriter for assistance from your brain.

The second danger is light. Arrange your light so that it illuminates but doesn't glare. An hour of glare will blind you so badly that you'll have to quit. I do much of my pressure writing with the light so

shielded that my keyboard is in shadow and my paper is illuminated dimly rather than brightly.

You'll drive yourself. You can't get production unless you do. You haven't any right to quit until you are so worn out that you stumble rather than walk to bed.

A cruel regime? Surely it is. It's not for ordinary writing; it is for those few emergencies when you must beat the calendar. Maintained momentum; that's what does the job for you.

"SEE HOW TO GROW FOOD"

By FRANK McDONOUGH, Editor,
Better Homes & Gardens

I show a feature from *Better Homes & Gardens* to illustrate why we bought it after rejecting dozens of others on the same subject.

Better Homes & Gardens is largely a how-to-do magazine—how to work out your living-room color scheme, how to plan a house full of convenience, how to grow a better lawn. Except for an occasional development like the new hormone weed-killers and the insecticide DDT, there is little basically new about these subjects. Carrots and tomatoes are planted and grow today much as they did a generation ago; the soil is the same, the pests the same, the time to dust and weed the same. So our job is to tell the old story in a fresh way, more clearly, more invitingly, more concisely.

Well, a couple of years ago when the victory-gardening campaign was launched, writers wore

library tables shiny reading the books and bulletins on vegetable-growing, and they sent us dozens of stories, hundreds, and we had to send them all back because they all said the same thing; they were just the books and bulletins all over again, and pretty dull, really.

They said to plant your onions when it was time. *When is that?*

They said to work your soil into good shape. *What does that mean?*

They said to be sure to give your plants enough water. *How much is enough?*

As a result, our own staff had to write almost everything we used.

But eventually we bought a story and liked it enough to run it serially for four issues, one installment of which I'm showing you here (in part). We were happy to get it and paid a good price for it. We bought it because the author had something none of the others had—a conception of the finished story, of what it would be, of how it would be, of how it would be illustrated. "See How to Grow Food—Step By Step."

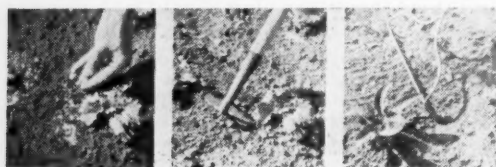
He saw the story not as a lot of words, raw material our own staff would have to make something of, but as a finished thing. It's true that his story wasn't complete, that we worked with him to get more pictures and inserted some of our own and that we rewrote his copy to make it more specific.

But we did buy his story, because he had an idea for a finished product. That's what we want. We want more than just the background facts. We can get a secretary to copy them out of the bulletins ourselves.

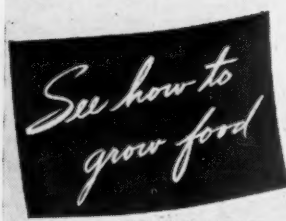
We rewrote the copy to make it more specific because when a man has never planted an onion it doesn't help him to tell him to plant the onion. You have to show him how to plant it, a good fast way to make the hole, how to get the roots down below the bulb and not bunched up around it and why it won't grow so well if they are bunched up. You have to tell him what kind of onions are grown from dry sets, what kind from seedling plants bought while still fresh and green. This is fundamental with us. A story must be exact where one can be exact, it must avoid vagueness and generalities. It mustn't say "plant your onions when it's onion planting time."

I could give you many other examples of stories we bought because the author had not only words, but ideas for finished stories.

(From a talk before the 1945 Midwestern Writers' Conference, Medill School of Journalism, Northwestern University.)



1. To prepare soil, use a fork or a similar tool to break up clumps of earth. 2. To plant onion sets, push them into the soil about two inches deep. 3. To weed, pull weeds by the roots, leaving the soil surface smooth.



STEP BY STEP

This is the first part of a picture story showing you how to grow food. It shows you some things you can do in your garden, and how to keep them growing and healthy.

To help you get your garden ready, we'll show you some things to do in the spring. We'll show you how to plant your seeds, and how to keep them growing and healthy.

Next, we'll show you how to plant your onion sets, and how to keep them growing and healthy.

Finally, we'll show you how to plant your seedling plants, and how to keep them growing and healthy.



Picture Technique (*Better Homes & Gardens*)

CONVINCINGNESS

... By CLEE WOODS



Clee Woods

SHE'S hard to ketch, boys—that thing the editors write about so much. *Convincingness*. Over and over you beginners will get this from the editors who hold their jobs the longest, "It lacks convincingness." Or effects to that word, if you'll let me twist a couple of clichés with aforethought malice.

The word is still *convincingness*. Well, Woods, what do they mean by convincingness, anyway?

They mean that your story must read, every line of it, every word, just as though you were doing no more than recording actual facts as they actually happened. That's it. Make the reader believe that your fiction story actually took place.

More than that, too. You must make your reader believe that your fiction characters really are living people, suffering, battling, loving, hating. Yes, and eating, smelling, hearing, seeing. Make that reader believe that a wounded man bleeds blood with a smell to it. That your cute boy cries when he gets the bellyache from sour apples.

Convincingness has its roots in almost every phase of story writing. But for me it has just one taproot, and that's sound plotting. All right, a few of you long-arrived writers, argue that the taproot is characterization if you will. I'll agree with you that perhaps on the tree you're thinking of the taproot is characterization. If you build your story around characters, for characters and of characters, letting there be plot or no plot, just as it may happen, then characterization is your taproot. But still not mine. Anyway, why argue over the relative importance of plot and characterization? It's like arguing which is more important, your heart or your head. You've got to have both to stay alive. So, I plot my stories, novels. If it's an article, I plan it instead of plotting.

Plot is wanted today, right now, in most editorial offices. And that brings us back to convincingness. The editors of the slicks want to please everybody; that includes the erudite and sophisticated. So they buy stories that will appeal to the unsophisticated and unlearned and that will appeal also to the top crust. For your modern educated reader you have to plot well and characterize well, too. But the plot must be so hidden, so deeply buried in the emotional appeal of the story that even your blasé reader will not suspect its presence. He may and should see your theme.

Some editors like to talk only about theme, and they shy at plot. There you get the glove flung right into your face. Hide your plot so that even these editors will not be aware of it while they're enjoying the presentation of your theme.

Sure, there is quite a difference between theme and plot. To write convincingly you must know that plot means the steps—call them sequences, if you wish—by which the writer plunges his characters into distress and fetches them out again. Theme usually may be called the message of the story, the moral or

sociological or religious or patriotic truth or untruth which you wish to leave with the reader after the story itself is forgotten.

Plot soundly. Characterize skilfully. Begin with a very real girl in very grave distress. Or facing a very real problem that a million other girls may be facing, all the way from Plymouth Rock to San Francisco. Start your soldier problem with a soldier whose toes are numb with cold, whose eyes fall naturally to a girl's legs, who sometimes wonders what the hell he's there for. And do this, whether that soldier is looking for the whites of their eyes at Bunker Hill or baseballing a hand grenade at a bucktoothed—you know what!

But come right out with the word. Don't make him say doggoned scamp. That's silly! He'd never say that in real life. If your market won't permit the ugly word, then don't use an unconvincing substitute. Incidentally, don't take him back to Kobe unless you've been to Kobe. Don't make your real girl's distress begin in an opium joint in San Francisco where sliding doors and mysterious curtains and slant-eyed hopheads will kill the very best story you ever can think up.

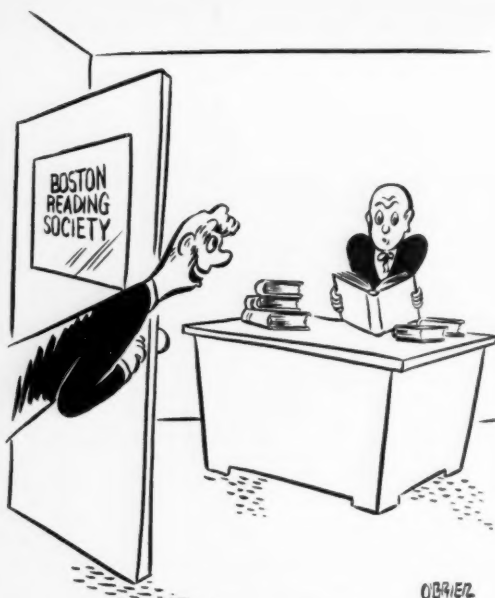
It'll bear repeating once more, keep them, all of them, on ground you know. At work you know. Then you can make your reader hear and taste and smell and see and feel as you have in those places. You can convince him that this is an actual account of a dramatic combination of events in the life of these real people, even though he knows of course that you invented it all in your head. That's art. That's real convincingness.

But do try to know some new ground, some new kind of work. Or at least know a new approach to old work. A new interpretation of old ground. You win your reader's tacit agreement to go along with you when you give him a fresh setting or a fresh viewpoint, so that from there on he's much more willing to be convinced that you're telling him a real story about real people in a really interesting place.

Then, to say it in a different way, you've created in your reader's mind and heart—and don't too long forget the heart part of it—an illusion that your story is history, not a string of imaginary events and emotions. But watch out. Just one unsound plot step, just one erroneous statement of fact, even just one word misused, can shatter the illusion and maybe make him throw your story down with disgust. And sometimes with an oath.

Why? Because you've destroyed the illusion you'd created. You may be telling ever so strong a story about ever so excellent a pioneer in the Kentucky mountains and you may have everything just right until you set him to grubbing dogwood trees with a pick instead of a mattock. Just a slight mistake in tools. But that one word "pick" ruins the whole story for the few of us left who know that you grub with a mattock, not a pick. Then in our disgust we tell others and the word gets about that you're not authentic and the reviewers begin to pick your novels to pieces because they're on the lookout for your slip-ups.

You may be telling a very solid story about a keen



"Censored any good books lately?"

blonde number who's haunting a certain port for a certain ship's return. You've got many thousands of young women readers suffering with her, longing with her, their hearts aching with her. Then you have the blonde number smear herself with rouge that only a brunette can wear—and blooey! Illusion gone. They see your tale is something you concocted in your faulty head, and they no longer believe you.

That's what you'll hear in Hollywood, "I don't believe it." By that they're saying that you didn't convince them that this is a real story. Write with such cynics in mind. Write so that the most cynical will forget the fact that all fiction stories are mental concoctions, so that even they will believe that this story really happened to really swell people.

One trick in convincingness is concentration upon a few salient things and by-passing the many others. Suppose you're describing Billy Goodhall. You wouldn't write out a list of what he wears, as though you were sending it all to the laundry and cleaners. You mention only hat and shirt or suit and shoes. Salient items of wear, and items which characterize him by their quality, color and style and by the way he wears them, too.

You don't go into anatomical details about the heroine's face. You don't say how many inches from corner to corner of her mouth. Don't count the freckles, although they are scattered and cute. You strike swifter, bolder strokes. You concentrate on impressions. Mention only eyes, mouth, hair.

Above all else, you seek to tell indirectly by her face what life has done to a woman, if she's old. What she hopes life is about to do for her, if she's young. You even can tell where a man's been by his face, what sort of work he's done most in his sixty-odd years. Don't railroaders have a certain look? Travelling salesmen another? Don't school teachers have the mark of their profession in their very words? On their faces?

That trick of concentration on the few carries into the story action itself. The skilled writer concentrates on a very few scenes, sequences. These he stresses,

squeezes for all they're worth. He doesn't set down in detail every action of the girl from the time he introduces her in distress until her man breaks a rib for her in the last line. He doesn't catalog her movements at the table or while she changes clothes, unless in these very things certain movements characterize the girl or betray her mood or tell something else vital to the story. Even then he chooses the particular movement or action which, by stressing, puts over the effect sought.

Close akin to that type of characterization and plotting is sound motivation. Here again the writer quickly shows his skill or crudeness. The crude writer who never gets checks just drags his characters from scene to scene without asking why they do as they do. Why? Why? Always keep asking it. Always make them, your characters, step up and say uncle. That is, make them have sound reasons every time for every act and thought and emotion.

Right here is where many a tyro falls down. He gets going in a story, speeds his characters along. Has a good setting, a compelling plot. But the plot calls for Jane to slap a man. So the tyro writer, if she's old-fashioned, makes modern, sophisticated Jane slap Eddie because he tries to kiss her goodnight at the conclusion of the first date. Wrong motivation, Mrs. Out-of-Date. They don't do it that way now.

The tyro can sin in the other direction just as readily. He's modern, college-bred, and educated in Italy and Normandy and Germany through 1942 to 1945. Too modern. He can't get back to his setting of his story, and give a girl the motivation she needs for slapping a Reb near Gettysburg in 1863. That's often a stumbling block. The inability to transfer over completely to your characters, wherever they are, whoever they may be. I objected to the movie portrayal of Scarlet O'Hara because the picture attributed to Scarlet the attitude, thoughts and way of life of a girl of 1940 instead of 1865. They just didn't think and act that way eighty years ago. I wasn't convinced, then, that Vivian Leigh was a girl of the Sixties, meeting the problems of the Sixties with the heritage of the Sixties.

This is another way of saying that you have to get right in there with your characters and live with them, feel with them, understand what they are and why they're that way—all in keeping with their time, place, occupation, background, and personal makeup. Then you yourself will believe the story. Feel it. Live it.

For all of this you need a lot of common sense. Good old plain horse sense on plot and motivation and people. And plain common understanding of your readers, how they will react to what you're putting down for them to read and believe.

Then you won't get sentimental about your characters or story and go off at some crazy tangent. Nor will you get lazy and think, "Oh, well, maybe this'll get by." Do that and you're lost. Make your characters do what they *must* do, being what they are and in the fix they are.

By this time perhaps you're asking what's the difference between convincingness and plausibility. Sometimes there is no difference. At other times quite a lot of difference. Plausibility only asks, can it happen? Or is it likely to have happened thus? The more plausibility applies more specifically to each individual action, emotion or thing, while convincingness may more often be the better word for the total effect of the story.

For instance, you may have a fair story all the way through, with no slip-up anywhere in details peculiar to setting, occupation, or actions of any

kind. Therefore, the story may be plausible all the way through. But after it's read and put down, you just don't believe it. That's lack of convincingness. Maybe due to the fact that the writer never made the story come alive. Never made his characters be real people engaged in a real struggle.

On the other hand, you may have a real bang-up story. Full of life and vigor and struggle. Convincing in every line until you have the slender heroine rush up to a box car loaded with bombs and push it upgrade onto a switch without the time or a key to throw the switch—all because your plot says she must get it out of the way of the runaway train. Then you've lost plausibility. She can't do it, no matter if she does have to do it. And with the loss of plausibility goes the lack of convincingness, of course.

Perhaps by now you've begun to feel that this thing called convincingness one time may stem directly from plausibility and another time it may become an elusive, subtle thing you just have to feel. Right. It may be nothing more than the way you put a story together. In the feel or lack of feel you give it. All wholly independent of plausibility.

It may be your interpretation of the events of your story. Or the stress you give here and the restraint you manifest there. It may be the keen sensitiveness of your touch. Or in the brute force you throw into your rugged tale. Or the fine distinction you manifest in word choice. Any one of these subtle, elusive things may give your story convincingness, even when

there is no question concerning plausibility.

If I were to tell you in a story that a prisoner in a small country jail could make his jailer weep merely by playing a harmonica, you probably wouldn't be convinced. But Norman Rockwell convinced me that it happened. Not with words but by a cover on the *Post*.

That cover is on my studio wall right now as I write this, fifteen or twenty years after I tore it from the magazine. Looking up at it now I believe Norman Rockwell. Because there's a seedy sheriff, tilted back on his old hickory-bottom chair. Winchester across his lap. Tousled hair showing beneath his old hat. A bloodhound tied at his feet.

Then at the little barred window is the prisoner, with the harmonica to his mouth. His face sad, yet hiding a suggestion of mischievous intent. I can just hear that lonesome, wailing tune. Feel the memories that it brings rushing back to the time-worn sheriff. And so I believe the tear that's trickling from the old man's eye. I know that the bony old hound wouldn't do any too hot a job of trailing if put on a fugitive's tracks. And so I do believe that a prisoner can make his jailer cry by a tune from a harmonica.

See what I mean? Norman Rockwell's *interpretation* of a scene made me believe his theme. Convinced me that he'd painted reality. Every time I look up at his picture I get a lift. It has feel. Vitality. Human nature at such good advantage.

THE STUDENT WRITER

CONDUCTED BY WILLARD E. HAWKINS

LXXXIII—CRIME FICTION FORMULAS

(12) The Robin Hood Crime Story

This is the one type of yarn in the realm of crime fiction which portrays the criminal as a sympathetic character—a hero. Sometimes a Manhunt story deals with a sympathetic character who is being relentlessly pursued by law-enforcement officers; but in such event the character is not actually a criminal—he is merely assumed to be one. Robin Hood of Sherwood Forest, legendary hero, was actually an outlaw—a highwayman. There were two mitigating circumstances: he was a likable rascal, and he robbed only the rich and arrogant in order to give to the deserving poor.

The implication was that he dispensed justice and merely defied laws and law enforcement agencies which were unjust. In consequence, from the reader's point of view, he was only technically a criminal.

The best-known fiction characters of which he was the prototype are Simon Templar, "The Saint," created by Leslie Charteris; "Raffles," created by E. W. Hornung; "The Gentle Gaffer," created by O. Henry, and "Get-Rich-Quick" Wallingford, created by George Randolph Chester. In varying degrees, these characters engaged in activities which were definitely criminal—robbery, house-breaking, blackmail, kidnapping, counterfeiting, hijacking, smuggling, extortion, and the like. But—they were likable, had a certain code of honor of their own, and their victims deserved to lose. "The Saint" perhaps followed the Robin Hood formula more closely than any of the others. His chief victims were likely to be criminals themselves. If, for example, he suc-

ceeded in getting the best of a gang of diamond robbers and hijacking the loot from them, he returned it anonymously to the rightful owner, or sent it to a charitable institution, after deducting ten per cent "commission" for himself. Thus he satisfied his own and the reader's conscience.

Examples of this type of yarn in the crime and detective magazines are surprisingly lacking. Diligent search produces only one example—and it may be regarded as somewhat wide of the point.

THE FOOLISH ONE. (Frank Johnson in Popular Detective, April, 1944.)

Cortot, the "Foolish One," works with Bill Kenyon, an American detective masquerading as a Belgian baker, in underground activities against German occupation forces. Actually, he is a brilliant radio engineer, but he appears to be a deaf-and-dumb half-wit and thus is ignored by the Nazi officers for whom he performs such duties as mopping, cleaning cuspidors, and the like. Whenever he is ordered from the office of the commanding officer, Colonel Schwarheim, he manages to leave his mop and pail (containing a concealed radio transmitter) in the corner. The messages he relays and the plans discussed in the Colonel's office are picked up by Kenyon through a receiving set concealed in one of his flour barrels. Kenyon in turn signals the information to bomber pilots when they circle overhead. After several successful forays by allied bombers which indicate a leak of his plans, Colonel Schwarheim becomes suspicious and sets a trap which exposes Cortot. He is about to carry out a retaliatory order which will mean the death of two hundred Belgian hostages when Cortot explodes a bomb, killing both the Colonel and himself.

This follows the formula of a sympathetic character in defiance of the authorities. The reader can hardly consider Cortot or Kenyon even technically as

criminals; but their activities against an unjust conqueror parallel Robin Hood's refusal to acknowledge obedience to the Sheriff of Nottingham and the venal overlords who oppressed the people of his day.

The lack of examples illustrating the Robin Hood theme in current crime-detective magazines may well be explained by editorial caution. We are willing to applaud defiance of unjust laws which existed a long time ago in feudal England; but the laws which safeguard our own lives and property are "something else again." Fiction which tends to make a hero out of any one who dispenses his own brand of justice while flouting these laws and their enforcement agencies might be construed as encouraging crime. This is especially a consideration with the pulps, which cater predominantly to immature and impressionable minds.

There is a definite fascination in the exploits of daring criminals. Crime usually appears as sordid, petty, and obnoxious, but when we have a gay, adventurous, impudent character in the outlaw role, it is difficult to refrain from a degree of secret admiration for him. He stands out as an individual, as some one who couldn't be forced into the conventional mold. Witness the appeal of Billy the Kid, despite the fact that he was an actual killer, a desperado in every sense of the word. It can hardly be doubted that stories featuring criminals of his type in a sympathetic light would find an avid reading public, especially among boys and young men. The dearth of such stories is accountable only on the assumption that editors know it would be unsafe to publish them. Undoubtedly the authorities would quickly step in and act if editors failed to exercise this tacit censorship at the source.

A way out of the difficulty consists of centering the story around the activities of a character who is apparently in conflict with the law, but who turns out in the end to be a detective, an F.B.I. agent, or other enforcement officer. Such a yarn may give readers the thrill of living vicariously the exploits of a sympathetic criminal, and yet will save the day for public policy by putting these exploits in an entirely new light before the story closes. We might picture

our character, for example, as engaged in counterfeiting, working with a criminal gang, helping them time and again actually to evade arrest, coming into dangerous conflict with police and government agents. At the last it will turn out that he displayed such wholehearted zest in order to gain the confidence of the gang with a view to rounding up the real high-ups. Many such stories have been written. Some of them will be found among examples previously given in this series, but, of course, they appeared in the guise of detective stories, not as Robin Hood crime stories.

PRACTICE SUGGESTIONS

1. Search for examples of Robin Hood crime stories in all-fiction detective periodicals. In slick paper magazines. In popular lending-library and pocket-size books.
2. Read examples of the Hornung, Charteris, Chester, and O. Henry stories featuring their characters mentioned in this installment. Can you add other modern names to the list?
3. In various types of magazines, search for examples of crime stories which employ the Robin Hood formula to the extent of picturing a sympathetic character in *seeming* conflict with the law.
4. Devise a number of stories in which a Robin Hood type of character carries on criminal or semi-criminal activities without antagonizing the reader.
5. Try to give these stories twists which reveal that the protagonist is actually on the side of the law. Develop the best of these outlines into completed yarns. They should be good potential sellers if they unite the fascinating Robin Hood type of appeal with a turn which satisfies all moral scruples.

□ □ □

Cosmetic and Drug Review, 347 Madison Ave., New York 17, pays on publication at the rate of 3 cents for the first 100 words, 1 cent a word thereafter, for news items on cosmetics and drug industry, with emphasis on the former. Cartoons are also used. Milton S. Malakoff is editor; Russell Rhodes, managing editor.

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LITERARY MARKET TIPS

Our New York correspondent writes: "Carrington Playhouse, Box 140, Times Square Station, will read half-hour radio scripts if suitably recommended. It is suggested that authors have scripts copyrighted or registered. As is customary by all radio houses, manuscripts must be accompanied by standard releases, secured upon prior application. . . . Robert Evans Productions Inc., 113 W. 57th St., Zone 19, is interested in securing the services of an established musical comedy writer who can develop a book from the synopsis of Robert Evans, president. "We are ready to pay any reasonable advance royalty, but will only consider a top flight writer," states Mr. Evans. . . . *Deb*, another publication for late-teen girls, is being brought out by Bilbara Publishing Co., 295 Madison Ave., Zone 17. . . . *This Month*, 247 Park Ave., Zone 17, having completed the rough going of a first year, is now promising better service on manuscript reports, and is aggressively in the market for articles with an international angle, timely, informative material, humor and human interest stories, and superior off-the-trail fiction. . . . Simon and Schuster, Inc., 1230 6th Ave., is considering the publication of Western novels under a special imprint and with special merchandising similar to its Inner Sanctum Mystery Department. Jack Bassett is the man to contact. . . . Edward S. Dangel has bought the Boston publishing firm of Waverly House and is attempting to bring it out of its lethargy of the past 40 months. Plans call for a mystery book a month for its Minute Man Mysteries, which will retail at \$2. Mr. Dangel is offering the most generous terms that we can for "firsts"—10% royalty on the first 2500 copies, 12½% on copies 2500 to 5000, and 15% on copies above 5000, with an initial payment of \$250 at time of signing the contract, and another \$250 at date of publication, the \$500 being a cash advance against the royalties on the first 2500 copies. The first book is scheduled to appear in September. . . . Associated Producers, 152 W. 42nd St., Zone 18, is actively in search of play material."

Boyd B. Stutler, Managing Editor, *The American Legion Magazine*, 1 Park Ave., New York 16, in reply to query concerning the effect on editorial contents of the admission of women veterans into the ranks of The American Legion, replied: "It is not our present intention to establish any special departments for service women, though our fiction policy is in process of revamping. While we still hold to the more rugged or adventure type of story, we plan to use the feature fiction piece, good name author, heavy on love, sex and adventure, and also a short story with romantic interest. Our present plans call for three pieces of fiction in each number, but the acute paper shortage has compelled us to curtail the program. However, we do hope to get into the swing by mid-summer. The fiction editor is David Stick, to whom contributions should be addressed."

Best Stories, 1745 Broadway, New York 19, which was omitted from our last Quarterly Market List due to lack of current information, is functioning as usual at 1745 Broadway. Lucile V. Tolces has replaced E. Rosston as managing editor, and the rate paid for "smooth stories of family appeal by new authors, to 5000," has been changed from \$25 a story to ½ cent a word.

Humor Magazine, 113 W. 57th St., New York 19, is again seeking original manuscripts. These

should consist of humorous fiction, anecdotes, fillers, puzzles, cartoons, light verse, stories, and articles covering such subjects as theatre, sports, politics, Broadway, Hollywood, radio, that would generally come under the heading of the American scene. Material should be kept under 5000 words. Payment is on acceptance at 10 cents a word for name authors, and 3 to 6 cents for material by other writers.

The Laundryman, 9 E. 38th St., New York 16, is at all times in the market for news and articles of interest to the operators of power laundries in hotels, hospitals, and other institutions. Each article must be backed by facts and figures and must be of help to the men and women whose business is laundering linens and wearing apparel. Suggested subjects for articles are—conserving laundry man (or woman) power; getting more work done without increasing number of workers; solving problems of extra shift operation; cutting employee turnover; installing and/or operating wage-incentive plans to increase employee earnings and cut unit costs; short-cuts in processing laundry work; speeding up washing or pressing operations; simplifying laundry services; fire prevention methods; smoothing flow of work through plant; machinery maintenance methods; training new workers; use of accounting records; selecting new employees; improving employee morale; powerplant operation; dry cleaning operation. Articles may run as long as necessary to tell the complete story without padding, be it 300 words or 3000. Photos to illustrate are important. Stories using the by-line of the person interviewed are preferred, but if that is impossible, quote the source . . . and be sure to get a written O.K. Rates are about 1 cent a word for text and \$2.50 each for photos accepted. Editor is Howard P. Galloway.

The New Yorker, 25 W. 43rd St., New York, when queried regarding its manuscript-handling practices, replied: "As a general rule, manuscripts are reported on by us within a week. Now and then a borderline story of necessity takes longer. And factual material is likely to be slower than fiction or verse. This is because our factual department, bearing most of the brunt of the magazine, is somewhat more complicated in its set-up."

Present market needs for the three magazines for Catholic youth published at 25 Groveland Terrace, Minneapolis 5, are: *The Catholic Boy*, published monthly except July and August. H. W. Sandberg, editor—material for boys 11 to 17; no serials but stories 2500 words, adventure, sports, school mystery, historical; no moralizing, no "writing down"; articles, 1000-2000 words, with photos, having boy appeal; hobby and career articles for boys, with photos very welcome; religious articles if writer knows his facts and avoids using characters too commonly used; cartoons and cartoon ideas appealing to age level; *The Catholic Miss of America*, same requirements as for *Catholic Boy*, except that material should appeal to girls 11 to 17, and *The Catholic Student*, the same except that material is used for girls and boys 8 to 10 years of age—no serials, but stories 1200 to 1500 words, as above, and articles 500 to 1000 words, illustrated; hobby articles for girls and boys, with photos. All three publications pay ½ cent and up on acceptance, depending on value of material.

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Young Catholic Messenger, 124 E. 3rd St., Dayton 2, Ohio, a weekly for boys and girls in junior high age, uses short stories, 1200-2000 words in length, with shorter lengths preferred; serials up to 1000 words per installment, \$75 to \$150; plays around 1200 words. General rate is 2 cents up on acceptance. Editor is Don Sharkey.

Modern Mexico, 381 4th Ave., New York 16, is embarking on an enlarged publication program. A recent release states: "We are open to human-interest articles; to articles dealing with the cultural institutions, business, people, and day-by-day life in Mexico; and to a more limited extent, to fiction. We are interested in material of approximately 2000 words, with illustrations."

Commentary, 425 4th Ave., New York, recently announced *Jewish Review*, incorporates *The Contemporary Jewish Record*, which, during its eight years of publication, earned a distinguished reputation.

Pacific Frontier and The Philippines, 305 Temple St., Los Angeles, is urgently in need of more interracial news items and good quality short stories on some phase of race relations. Stanley B. Garibay is publisher.

A reader comes to the defense of the Northwestern Press, 2200 Park Ave., Minneapolis, an adverse report on which was carried in our February issue. Says this writer, "I'm surprised at the complaint about Northwestern Press. I have dealt with this house for 13 years, both as a writer and speech teacher, and have always found them prompt and considerate. More often than not a rejection is accompanied with a constructive letter from Mr. Lawrence Brings, explaining the reason, and a check is always included with the acceptance."

Renaissance, published by The Usher Society, 325 W. 11th St., New York 14, and edited by James Blish and Robert W. Lowndes, is now open for high quality material of all kinds—fiction to 6000 words, critical articles up to 10,000, original music in small forms, pen, pencil, or wash drawings, photographs of new sculpture or paintings, poetry, one-act plays, and an occasional humorous work; also, silk-screen designs for covers. "Our only requirement is that the work be of high quality in its field," state the editors. The magazine is a large bi-monthly (8 1/2 x 11), carefully mimeographed on good paper, with printed covers and liberal use of lithography, photographs, and so on; its circulation is at present confined, in the main, to practitioners of the various arts which it covers, but subscriptions are on sale to anyone. The editors state, "We are particularly interested in newcomers and unknowns. Payment is usually by subscription, but exceptional work may be awarded additional payment."

J. C. Review, 130 N. Wells St., Chicago 6, is no longer in the market for outside material, according to Dwayne Ludwig, editor.

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The Author & Journalist

PRIZE CONTESTS

Lovers, The Magazine of Enchantment, 114 E. 32nd St., New York, conducts two regular contests—the Love Call Contest based on a problem letter published in the magazine, with cash awards of \$50, \$25, and \$10 for the best letters offering solution, and My Favorite Love Letter Contest, offering \$25 for a first award, and \$5 each for the ten next most outstanding letters, each under 600 words in length.

The Seaman's Church Institute of New York will award three prizes (\$25, \$15, \$10) for the best entries in its third annual Marine Poetry Contest for merchant seamen of the United Nations and cadets and trainees in the Marine Schools. For complete information address Marine Poetry Contest, 25 South St., New York 4.

Modern Romances, 149 Madison Ave., New York 16, will award a total of \$10,000 in prizes for the best material entered up to August 1, 1946—three first prizes of \$1000 each, four second prizes of \$750 each, and eight third prizes of \$500. Story-lengths must be in the following categories: book-lengths, 15,000-20,000 words; novelettes, 10,000-12,000, and short stories, 5000-8000. Hazel M. Berge, editor, emphasizes, however, that the competition is based on merit, not length, that, if a short story or novellette should be considered the best, it would receive a top prize over a not-quite-so-good book-length. Stories found available for purchase will be paid for immediately at 3 cents a word. If the story is awarded a prize after the contest closes, the author will receive a check for the balance. Careful study of recent copies of the magazine will aid the writer in getting a broad slant on the type of material used. All manuscripts entered in the competition should be marked "Contest Entry" and the number of words should be indicated on the first page.

The Julia Ellsworth Ford Foundation Annual Contest for Children is under way for 1946. Prize is \$1250 for the juvenile book manuscript that the judges consider will be "a distinguished contribution to current literature for children." Of this sum, \$500 will be an outright award, \$750 will apply against royalties. The prize-winning book will be published and distributed by Julius Messner, Inc., 8 W. 40th St., New York 18, to whom requests for full details of the competition and entry blanks should be addressed.

The University of Chicago, Chicago, Ill., announces that two annual fiction awards, the Ann Watkins Fellowships, have been established at the University by Ann Watkins, Inc., New York literary agents, to encourage and support young American writers. The awards, \$1500 to the winner, \$500 to the runner-up, are open to citizens of the United States under 30 years of age who are enrolled in graduate or undergraduate work at the University. In judging manuscripts, the emphasis will be placed on literary rather than commercially successful qualities.

Picture News, Box 111, Bridgeport, Conn., is offering \$1000 in cash prizes (\$200, \$150, \$100, down to 38 prizes of \$10 each) for the "Best Remembered Experience of Your Life." The story must not be over 400 words in length, may be written in pencil, with pen, or on the typewriter. All letters must be postmarked before midnight of April 1, 1946.

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My Baby, 1 E. 53rd St., New York, which for the past three years has been issued quarterly, became a monthly with the March issue.

April, 1946

The Living Church, 744 N. 4th St., Milwaukee 3, an Episcopal weekly, pays on acceptance, at rates varying according to the importance of the articles, for material on religious or social subjects. Rev. R. A. Park, managing editor, strongly advises contributors to familiarize themselves thoroughly with the magazine before submitting material. Some verse is used, but no payment is made for it.

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NEW MAGAZINES

(Continued from Page 8)

Screen Writers' Guild, 1655 N. Cherokee, Hollywood 28, a monthly, is a very limited market for articles relating to film material, 1000-3000 words, or articles on film criticism or writing of the same length, as almost all material is done on assignment by members of the Screen Writers' Guild. Material is all semi-technical literary related to the craft of screen writing, whether from audience, critics or writers' point of view. At present, no payment is being made. Second serial, motion picture, book, dramatic rights are all given to the author, but foreign rights, at the moment only to France and Czechoslovakia, are retained, with payment for any material sold to these markets going to the author. Dalton Trumbo is editor, Gordon Kahn, managing editor, and Harold J. Salemsen, director of publications.

See and Hear, The Journal on Audio-Visual Learning, published by E. M. Hale and Co., Eau Claire, Wis., is published every month of the school year from September through May, inclusive. This is the first year of publication. Editor is Walter A. Wittich of the University of Wisconsin, Madison. Prospective contributors should contact Mr. Wittich.

The Californian, 210 W. 7th St., Los Angeles, a monthly edited by J. R. O. Sherenko, pays on publication at varying rates for articles on interesting women in California life, 750-1000 words, interesting careers for women, genuine, non-formula short stories, light, warm, mood, character, plot, 1000-1800 words, and for humorous or "light" emotional verse. California travel articles are desired.

Hence, 2400 W. Madison, Chicago 12, a monthly edited by Paul D. Vendeland, is an open market for articles of 500 to 2500 words, short stories, novelettes, serials, editorials, all of general veteran interest. Verse, fillers, jokes, and other miscellany, also with veteran interest, are used. The love theme can predominate in fiction. Payment is usually made on publication, occasionally on acceptance. Verse is paid for at approximately 21 cents a line. "Since *Hence* is a new publication", Mr. Vendeland says, "we have not yet developed a standard of payment, as we are still adding features to our make-up. We will, in the case of contributions, offer a price to the author—acceptance at his own discretion."

Heart of Racing, Box 7011, Big City Station, New Orleans, La., a monthly newspaper covering the unusual activities of horses and horsemen throughout the nation, needs articles, fiction, and brief humor slanted toward some phase of racing, and ranging in length from 3500 words, according to D. Alice Snyder, editor. Miss Snyder is also interested in receiving humorous material, including essays, editorials, verse, jokes, cartoons, photos and general fillers. Payment is on acceptance at varying rates. Occasional material by-lined by sports celebrities will be used.

Brooklyn—The Different Digest, 175 Shepherd Ave., Brooklyn, N. Y., is a new monthly published by the Vet Publishing Co., an organization of ex-soldiers, which will appear shortly. It will use articles on local personalities, anecdotes, history, and so forth, about Brooklyn, short stories, poetry, and cartoons. Articles and short stories should be kept to 1500 words. Charles W. De Mangin, editor, announces that payment will be moderate, on publication.

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The Author & Journalist

April, 1941

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□ □ □ □

MOSTLY PERSONAL

(Continued from Page 3)

Of 20 books by Florence Means, Houghton Mifflin has published 14 (including the latest, "The Moved-Outers"), the Friendship Press, six. Some of her titles—"Candle in the Mist," "Penny for Luck," "The Singing Wood," "Across the Fruited Plain," "Peter of the Mesa," "Shuttered Windows," and "Whispering Girl."

At the Hotel Astor luncheon in New York last fall launching Children's Book Week, Mrs. Means was selected for the annual award (a scroll) of the Child Study Association of America, for "The Moved-Outers," "a strong realistic picture translating democratic ideals into everyday terms for boys and girls today." The January-February issue of *Horn Book* told the story of her life in sixteen or so profusely illustrated pages.

▲ ▲ ▲

Duell, Sloan & Pearce will publish in April an anthology of mystery stories written by members of the Mystery Writers' Association. It's a novel fundraising project which, if successful, will be repeated; members donate reprint rights to the Association, which receives all royalties. . . . Some big news is coming from MWA soon.

▲ ▲ ▲

Clee and Betty Woods are back from Old Mexico where they combined a pleasant vacation with the gathering of literary material. Clee will again teach at the summer Writers' Workshop, Western State College, Gunnison, Colorado. . . . Mildred I. Reid and Evelyn G. Haynes write us enthusiastically of their respective summer writers' groups at Contoocook (New Hampshire town remembered so well by John and me for the railroad conductor's calling of it, "Con'toocook — Contoo'cook") and Hendersonville, N. C. (Huckleberry Mountain.)

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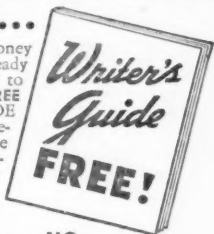
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